

there is a Christian sister who feels like doing something for the Master,—there these boys and girls can be gathered in and taught about Jesus."

The movement commended itself to the different churches, and has received the endorsement of the International and World's Sunday-school Conventions. "The number," says Dr. Hazard, "is rapidly, even phenomenally, growing, and the suggestion is that soon there will not be a Sunday-school which pretends to be well equipped which will not have its Home Department."

ITS PURPOSE.

"The purpose of the Home Department," says Dr. Hazard, "is to secure, through associated effort in connection with the Sunday-school, a general and systematic study of the Scriptures."

The need of such study he thus urges: "The Bible does not have the place in the home which it ought to have. In families generally it is an unstudied and almost unread volume. The newspaper, the magazine, the novel crowd it out. Wherever the Bible is studied the home is sweetened and purified. Better a half hour of close study than a dozen hours of superficial reading, or reading which has merely for its object the perusal of the whole Bible in a specified time."

ITS POSSIBILITIES.

I believe that there lie hidden in the Home Department germs of grandest possibilities, of widest usefulness, of greatest spiritual profit. The Sunday-schools of Ontario gather into their circle many thousands of scholars and accomplish an untold amount of good, but they leave outside a much larger number than they bring inside. This is the class for whom the Home Department specially ministers. The busy toilers in the field, the forge, the factory, or the store; the fathers and mothers engrossed in family cares; the invalids upon whom God's hand has been laid and who are the prisoners of his providence; the gray-haired sires and grandmothers upon whom the infirmities of age have crept, and who perhaps may feel themselves neglected and out of touch and out of sympathy with the more active employments and enjoyments of life; the little children, too young or too remote from church or school to enjoy their privileges—the Home Department unites all these in a goodly fellowship for the study

at the same time with the many thousands of scholars in the Sunday-schools the same passages of the word of God. It furnishes great and ennobling themes of thought and study, it creates common interests and common sympathies for the whole family—especially for the profitable employment of the holy hours of the Sabbath day.

ITS CHRISTLY MISSION.

But most of all it enables the church to fulfil its Christly duty of remembering the forgotten, or visiting the forsaken, of seeking and saving that which is lost. The quarterly visitors of the Home Department carry the sacred influences of the Gospel to many who would otherwise be neglected,—to the servant man, or the farm labourer, or shop girl, or apprentice boy, whose monotonous round of toil is often uncheered by a friendly word or smile of sympathy. Thus dull lives are brightened, sad hearts are cheered, and even the prisoners in the cell, the patient in the hospital, are remembered. It is no longer possible for such to say, "No man careth for my soul." They are made to feel that the church does care, that, like our blessed Lord, when it sees the multitude as a sheep having no shepherd, it has compassion upon them, and seeks to succour and to save.

John Wesley's advice to his preachers was to go not merely to those who needed them, but those who needed them most. This is the mission of the Home Department. If there be a lonely, sorrowful, forsaken, sinful man or woman in the neighbourhood, one who has fallen among thieves by the wayside, who has been bruised and beaten and left half dead, despoiled of character, and hope, and happiness, and all that makes life worth living, it is the church's duty to find that man, or that woman. It must not, like the priest or the Levite, pass by on the other side, but, like the Good Samaritan, it must bind up the wounds, wipe away the tears, impart the comforts and consolations of God's grace and so save a lost and erring brother or sinning sister.

The church should provide a special literature for the Home Department, for the shut-ins and shut-outs, for the immigrants to our shores whose education has been so neglected that they can scarcely spell their own name, and who shrink from exposing their ignorance to the bright-eyed boys and girls in our